

### 40 Days Week 3

**HS=Hannah Schindler**

**KE=Karen Ehman**

[Music]

**HS:** Hi and welcome, friends! If you are studying with us live, then you know First 5 and Online Bible Studies are doing this study together! If you're doing this at a later date, whether it's an archived OBS study or in the First 5 app, we're so excited you are here. Each weekend, we have an audio teaching to connect the chapters we studied this past week. This is where we will be able to dig deeper into the Scripture and content we studied together.

**HS:** So, we just finished Week 3 of our study, *The Answers to Your Deepest Longings: 40 Days through the Bible*. My name is Hannah Schindler, and I get to serve on the First 5 team here at Proverbs 31 Ministries. Today we have joining us, Karen Ehman. How are you today, Karen?

**KE:** Hey Hannah, I'm hanging in there. I'm hanging in there. We've had a couple of deaths in the extended family, but thankfully, they both knew the Lord, and so they're with Jesus now. I'm trying to focus my mind on that and keep going.

**HS:** Amen. I know that's so hard, and I'm so sorry to hear that, Karen. But I love that you showed up to do this teaching. I know it means the world to us, and it will mean so much to those family members who are with the Lord now that you are still sharing the gospel and the Good News of Jesus. I'm excited for your teaching. Let me read our Major Moments before we jump in today.

**KE:** Sounds good.

**HS:** Joshua 1: The land of Canaan was again promised to Joshua as an inheritance. Judges 2: The Lord provided Israel with judges, to satisfy their longing for security from their enemies, but Israel did not listen to their judges. 1 Samuel 8: The Israelites asked God for a king, which God said is a rejection of Him. 1 Samuel 9: God raised up Saul to be king, and he failed to seek God. 2 Samuel 5: Samuel anointed David to replace Saul as king, which eventually led to the division of Israel. Okay, Karen, I'd love for you to share your teaching with us today.

**KE:** Thanks, Hannah. Today we're going to chat about a topic that has been something I have wrestled with, and one I'm certain a lot of people listening to us have wrestled with as well. If we look closely over the last week's chapters, we will see this topic woven into the Scripture that we studied. However, it's not like we would be able to grab a highlighter — or one of those cool Bible study colored pencils — and easily circle the word right there in our Bibles, but if we read the chapters in their entirety looking for themes, the topic bubbles up to the surface from among the accounts we studied this past week. And that topic is the theme of security. Now, when I first think of the word "security," what pops in my mind is something I wonder if you — or any of our

First 5 family members — had as a child ... a security blanket? Maybe one like the character Linus in the classic cartoon series *Peanuts* hauled around. Remember Linus?

**HS:** Yes.

**KE:** He was always dragging around that blanket, refusing to let go of it no matter how hard any of his friends begged him to. Did you have a favorite security blanket, Hannah, or maybe a stuffed animal that you were particularly attached to?

**HS:** Yes! Mine was, if you all remember Arthur, the aardvark from PBS Kids. My grandmother is very artistic, and she painted me a blanket of Arthur. I still have it to this day. I don't use it, but I have it. So, mine was my Arthur blanket. It went on sleepovers. I had it with me all the time.

**KE:** Aww, how sweet is that. I remember Arthur. My kids watched Arthur. That makes me feel old. Well, I had a pink teddy bear given to me by a woman we called Grandma Hoffman. She wasn't really my grandmother, but she lived down the street from us, and all the neighborhood kids called her Grandma Hoffman. When I was born, she brought this sweet little pink teddy bear up to the hospital when she visited my mom and I carried that thing around through my whole childhood. I almost stuffed it in my suitcase when I went to college, but I didn't. But when I got married and had my first child, guess what was wrapped up and given to me? But the sweet pink teddy bear didn't have a name, other than Teddy. My mom gave it back to me. So that was my little security thing that I carried around and slept with.

**KE:** You know as we look at our study from this week, we can see people who were longing for security, just as much as Linus longed for that blanket, or you wanted to carry your Arthur blanket, or I wanted my pink teddy. So, let's look back a little bit at these chapters. In Joshua Chapter 1, Moses is no longer around, and God informs Joshua that He's given the land of Canaan to the Israelites. It is theirs to take. They just need to be strong and courageous and not let the book of the law depart from Israel's mouth. They are to meditate on it day and night in order to find success. Now I'm sure they thought that possessing the land would bring them security in life. They'd have a place of their own and could rest assured.

**KE:** Then, in Judges Chapter 2, we see some not-so-good news delivered to the Israelites. An angel of the Lord comes demanding to know why the children of Israel have made covenants with the inhabitants of the land and why they'd not torn down their altars. Because of these decisions, the Israelites are told that the ungodly people around them will become thorns in their sides, and their false gods will become snares. You see, after Joshua and his generation eventually died, a new generation rose up that did not know the Lord or God's works in Egypt. They abandoned the Lord and did evil in His sight by serving these false gods — gods that promised security but could not deliver on that promise. This allegiance to these idols greatly angered the Lord. However, God — as He always does — displayed mercy by raising up judges to deliver them. However, most of the time, the Israelites didn't listen to the judges.

**KE:** Then, moving on to Chapter 8 of 1 Samuel, we see the chronicles of Samuel's sons taking their place as judges in Israel once Samuel grew older and no longer served. Now Samuel had two corrupt sons, Joel and Abiah. Unfortunately — and expectedly — corrupt sons do not make godly judges, and this pair was no exception. They took bribes, and they perverted justice. This made the people unhappy with the governing system, and they complained about it to Samuel. So, since the judges hadn't brought them the life they wanted, guess what they came up with? A new idea. They asked for a king because, you know, all the other nations had a king. "Give me a king, they have a king." Maybe *that* would please them and make them feel secure. The request made Samuel feel a little bit like he'd been rejected, but God assured him that they hadn't rejected Samuel; they'd actually rejected God who was the true King. God warned the people that having a king meant this ruler would oppress the people, take their land and give it to his own servants because this is typical of what the kings of other nations did back then. After hearing all of this, the people still moved forward with their desire for a human king. So, God said, "Fine!" and He gave them what they wanted.

**KE:** Now, in 1 Samuel 9, we see the selection of the first human king of the people of Israel. The Lord had revealed to Samuel: "*Tomorrow about this time I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be prince over my people Israel. He shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines. For I have seen my people, because their cry has come to me.*" The selection of this king did come out of the tribe of Benjamin, of the family of Kish. And this king was named Saul.

**KE:** *Perhaps*, hoped the people, *this human king would bring us the security we long for.* And then finally, in 2 Samuel 5, we read that later on, the elders of Israel all recognize David as king. After six years and six months, he moves from Hebron to Jerusalem; he overtakes it despite the resistance from the Jebusites. There David built a great palace. The Philistines challenged the new king, but they were soon defeated. It is beginning to look like maybe safety and refuge will come to the Israelites after all. Now that's a whole, big, long review of what we saw, but if we look at these, we don't see the word security, but what we see is the people of Israel looking for a place to permanently pin their trust — a deep longing for a sense of certainty and security in life. So, let's just think about it. At first, they longed to trust in places and property — to get that famed promised land as their inheritance. Later, they believed they could put their trust in people, important people who could provide them with something they longed for — perhaps the judges would help them dwell securely and be safe from their enemies. Well, when that didn't work out so well, they practically begged God to give them a ruler with a high position — "*Give us a King!*" they pleaded.

**KE:** You know, we really are not quite different from the Old Testament Israelites, are we? Looking to places and property, people and those in high positions to give us a sense of security. We too might try to place our trust in places and property — if I can just get into that college, land that job, or buy that house. Or we look for security in people. It may be in a relationship — if I just finally find Mr. Wonderful, they will provide me with the security — even if it is just the security of identity — of being engaged or being a married woman. Or we look to a person who is a potential employer sitting across the interview desk from us and think, "If only

this person will hire me for this dream job, then I will be secure in life!” And we even look to people with positions — politicians and our government, much like a judge or a king was back then — to give us security, both physical and maybe even financial security. People, places, positions and property. We think they will make us secure.

**HS:** Yeah, you are so right, Karen. Whenever you were just talking about places and people and talking about the judges and the kings, it made me think of how there is such confidence that we place in politicians and government or even celebrities and athletes, and how we find our validation and our security in man. It’s not in the Lord. This is really challenging to remind us that this is not where we find security. We find it in the Lord.

**KE:** Exactly, because you know all those that you just mentioned — they are counterfeit sources of security. We look to counterfeit sources all the time. But, in order to find true security, there is something that we must do. Now, I am not going to pull out a slick solution verse to all of this, telling us where to find true security. I, Hannah, want to go back to the *Peanuts* cartoon character Linus. Is that okay?

**HS:** Yeah, let’s do it.

**KE:** Okay. In 1965, *A Charlie Brown Christmas* TV special was first released. There is a scene, you may remember, where Linus, holding that security blanket of his, delivers a speech telling of the true meaning of Christmas. Now Linus, who not once was ever drawn by artist Charles Schulz without his perpetual security blanket, he begins delivering that speech with the blanket in hand (sometimes it’s bent so it looks like a shepherd’s crook). Here is the Scripture he reads while telling of the true meaning of Christmas: Luke 2:8-14 (I’m going to read it in the KJV — because that is what version Linus used.) *“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, ‘Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.’”*

**KE:** There is a crucial detail that makes the clip of Linus’ speech extremely relevant and which many people claim was subtly, but purposefully, put in by the artist, Mr. Schulz. Linus drops his beloved security blanket during his speech. The audience is shocked. He never let’s go of that blanket. Ever! But he does now. And when does he drop it? Precisely at the time he utters the phrase, “Fear not!” That’s when he drops his blanket. You can go do a search for the little clip of it online and watch it for yourself.

**HS:** That's so sweet. I have tears in my eyes because I can just envision this sweet scene of Linus and how there is this beauty of him dropping that blanket. So, I can envision it. I know exactly what you are talking about, Karen. I love that you shared that today.

**KE:** I think the lesson of us is that true security is only found when we drop what we have been holding tightly onto and falsely relying on, and instead we trust our God who tells us to "fear not." Now this phrase that Linus utters that they were "sore afraid." I love that. They were sore afraid. It's the Greek word for afraid that I'm going to talk about for a second here. It's called Phobeó (Pronounced fob-eh'-o) It's spelled: P-H-O-B-E-O and comes from the root word phobos. P-H-O-B-O-S. Do these words make you think of another English word, Hannah?

**HS:** Uh, it reminds me of phobic or phobia.

**KE:** Exactly. Phobia, the English word phobia. The word phobia in our language means: A strong fear, dislike or aversion. An uncontrollable dread. Or a persistent, abnormal and irrational fear of a specific thing or situation that compels one to avoid it. That's our English word phobia. Now the Greek word *Phobeo* means: **to be struck with fear, to be seized with alarm: to dread, fear, harm or injury, to put to flight by terrifying (to scare away)**. Now in some instances in the Bible, it means reverence, as in the phrase, "The fear of the Lord." But here it means to be seized and struck with fear. You just want to run away because you are just so terrified. Now when the shepherds were sore afraid, Phobeó, the angel told them to "fear not." The same Greek word, Phobeó, is used there too. And the Bible tells us hundreds of times to "fear not." I've heard it suggested before that there are 365 times that we are told to "fear not," enough for one per day. When I searched, I found 170 times.

**HS:** Yeah.

**KE:** In either case, it is a lot of times we are instructed to fear not! When we learn to take God at His word and "fear not," that's when we finally find true security. God alone is the place, He alone is the person, He alone has the position where we can find our security. Listen to a few passages that touch on security and see if you hear two common themes coming through — the practice we must adopt, and the promise God gives us: Proverbs 1:32-33 (ESV) "*For the simple are killed by their turning away, and the complacency of fools destroys them; but whoever listens to me will dwell secure and will be at ease, without dread of disaster.*" Psalm 16:8-9 (ESV) "*I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. Therefore, my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure.*" Proverbs 10:8-9 (ESV) "*The wise of heart will receive commandments, but a babbling fool will come to ruin. Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out.*" Proverbs 3:21-26 (ESV) "*My son, do not lose sight of these — keep sound wisdom and discretion, and they will be life for your soul and adornment for your neck. Then you will walk on your way securely, and your foot will not stumble. If you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. Do not be afraid of sudden terror or of the ruin of the wicked, when it comes, for the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught.*"

**KE:** Now, the Hebrew word rendered “securely” or secure in these Old Testament passages, it’s a word pronounced: betach (Pronounced: beh’takh) B-E-T-A-C-H. It means with assurance, boldly, without care, with confidence, in hope, and safely secure — both the act of knowing in your mind you are secure and the feeling of trusting without fear. So, our minds know it, and our hearts feel it. What is the key to experiencing the security that is listed in these passages? What’s this practice we must adopt? Let’s look back at some phrases found in them. Proverbs 1:33, *“but whoever listens to me will dwell secure.”* Psalm 16:8, *“I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.”* Proverbs 10:8, *“The wise of heart will receive commandments.”* Receive means to take them into their life and do them. Proverbs 3:21-22, *“My son, do not lose sight of these—keep sound wisdom and discretion, and they will be life for your soul and adornment for your neck.”*

**KE:** The practice that we should adopt is to seek to walk closely with God, acquiring His wisdom that’s found in His Word, setting it continually before us, setting Him continually before us — that is what will grant us security; security that no place, person or position can give us. We find security in spending time in God’s Word, tethering our hearts to it as we dive deep into it, not just reading it — as important as that is — but studying it, committing it to memory, and then living by its principles and precepts. That’s how we find security.

**HS:** I love that. That’s so good, Karen. I love that you broke down the definition of both the act of knowing in your mind you’re secure and the feeling of trusting without fear. That’s so good.

**KE:** We are only going to get to that place, Hannah, when we realize God alone is the place, He alone is the person, He alone has the position where we can find our security ... and He is the only one with a promise! There is another commonality we find in these passages about security; it’s a promise. Many of these verses, if you go back over them, talk about your walk, or about your feet not slipping. Your feet being secure about standing upright, walking without falling. Let’s just look back at two of them: Proverbs 10:8-9 (ESV), *“The wise of heart will receive commandments, but a babbling fool will come to ruin. Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out.”* Proverbs 3:21-26 (ESV), *“My son, do not lose sight of these—keep sound wisdom and discretion, and they will be life for your soul and adornment for your neck. Then you will walk on your way securely, and your foot will not stumble. If you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. Do not be afraid of sudden terror or of the ruin of the wicked, when it comes, for the Lord (here’s another promise) will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught.”*

**KE:** You know, Hannah, I like to think of something that a friend said to me once, a little phrase I’ve never forgotten about when we think of this concept of walking securely in life and not stumbling. We need to know, in our life, where to glance and where to gaze. Now let me explain that. You see we get these mixed up. We tend to stare at our situation; we gaze at it. Every once in a while, we glance up to heaven and say, “Hey God, can You help me out a little here? I’m a little sore afraid. Can You help me, can You help me?” Instead, we need to flip the script. We should, of course, glance at our situation so we can assess what’s going on, right? In order

to pray to God. But we need to learn to fix our gaze upon God — getting to know Him in His Word. When we make this a habit in our life, going to God to find the wisdom He offers us, seeking to understand His commands, and asking Him to help us carry them out, *that* is when we will find security, *that* is when we will learn to walk without stumbling or having our feet slip. When we learn to glance at our situation but fix our gaze upon God.

**HS:** I love that. Yeah, it reminds me — I can't even. I'm trying to look in my Bible. The fixing our eyes on Jesus. I think it's Hebrews 12, it says "*looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.*" I love that, Karen. That's so great.

**KE:** I do it backward so often. I'm not safe.

**HS:** Right.

**KE:** I've got this perfected but it's so easy to stare at your circumstances, and then every once in a while, go, "Oh, well maybe I should pray." But when we slip back, it helps us to tether our hearts to God's Word and to learn to walk more securely. Today, when we think about our walk with Christ, we desperately don't want to make a misstep. The key is found in the passages that we just went over, is having our thoughts and our actions directly tied to God's Word. But even when we do make a mistake — I want to make sure that I say that because we are going to stumble at times. All of us. God is there to forgive us and set our foot back on the right path again. The way I like to think about this in our walk with Christ, by picturing a spiritual and perpetual GPS. You know how your GPS is when you get off course, or maybe your navigation app on your phone? At least on the one I use, when I take a wrong turn, which I usually do. You know, Hannah, I don't hear a voice suddenly scolding me or telling me they're tired of my mistakes over and over again and will no longer help me. I hear one simple and solitary word, one that may seem a little annoying coming out of my navigation system over and over again, but one that is so reassuring and beautiful when it rolls off the lips of our Creator as we navigate life. That's the word: "*Recalculating. Recalculating.*"

**KE:** My prayer for all of us, that when we face situations of uncertainty and times of trouble, is that we won't look to places or people or positions, but we will place our trust in the God who tells us to, "Fear not!" That we will make it our practice to grow in God's wisdom through His Word and that we will trust the promise that He will make our way secure. May we all drop our tattered security blankets, whatever they are. We all have different ones. However comfy they may feel, and find our security in God alone, striving to learn and obey what He tells us to do, as we keep looking to Him for the forgiveness He offers when we do stumble or find ourselves slipping. He will enable us to recalculate and get our feet back on the right path. He alone is worthy of our trust. He alone is able to offer us true security.

**HS:** Amen, that's so good, Karen. Honestly, I was just thinking as you were coming to a close about how as adults, maybe some people are thinking, "I don't have a security blanket," but then I challenged myself of I'm not carrying around my Arthur blanket anymore, but what is my security blanket? How are cell phones may be our security blanket because how often do you

pull out your phone in an awkward situation where you don't have to talk to somebody that you don't know? Or you pretend to have a text message, or you feel like your phone vibrated because you're that used to your phone. So I don't know for anybody else, but I will say for me that my phone can definitely be that security blanket and be the place of distraction to keep me from — I allow it to be a distraction from keeping me from turning to the Lord. Instead of just numbing by just scrolling and being on social media, I could be spending time with the Lord. And Karen, I just want to say thank you for also sharing sweet Linus and his story and that security blanket, and how we don't have to be in fear in that we can be in total security of knowing who loves us so much that He sent His own Son to die on the cross for our sins. So, I love everything that you shared with us, Karen. It was so wonderful. Thank you for sharing this today.

**KE:** Thank you, and thank you for adding that in about the cell phone. Yeah, I often tell myself hit your knees, don't pick up your phone. I want to just pick it up and have somebody solve my problem. But thanks for that reminder too that we need to go to God first. Thanks so much for having me today, Hannah. I've enjoyed being with you.

**HS:** We are so glad you are here too. Let me go ahead and close us in prayer. Father God, we just thank You for our security being in You. God, I thank You so much for the security that we have in knowing we are sons and daughters of Christ. I thank You for Jesus dying on the cross for our sins and being raised from the dead. So again, we have this security, this freedom knowing we don't have to live a perfect life in order to have a forever with You, Jesus. Thank You, Lord, for allowing us to not be in fear and to not put places or people or positions above You, God. Or even things like our cell phones and social media. God, I just thank You so much for all that You're doing in our lives, and thank You for just allowing us to look more and more into Your Word each and every week. Lord, we love You and thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, amen.